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MANNER OF TEACHING LEGENDS

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The following account of the manner of teaching legends was obtained at Atuona, on the island of Hivaoa. When a father desired to have his son or daughter taught legends (*ha'akekai*) and recitation of genealogy (*mata tetau*) he built in the neighborhood of his own dwelling a large special house (*oho au*) for the purpose, and employed a bard (*tuhuna o'ono*) to instruct the pupils. In this house as many as thirty men and women ranking from twenty to forty years in age would come to participate in the instruction with the lad or girl for whom the *oho au* had been built. All lived at the *oho au* and were instructed in the bard's lore (*tekao tuhuna*). During periods of instruction, the pupils were tapu, being consecrated to the work, and sexual intercourse was prohibited. The infringement of this tapu during instruction was supposed to cause blindness. As youths and maids could not be expected to keep the tapu on sexual intercourse, it was only those whose years exceeded twenty who attended the instructions in the *oho au*.

Periods of consecrated instruction lasted generally one moon; but the *tuhuna*, who decided upon the length of the period upon his own discretion or following the desire of his employer, might shorten the duration.

Recesses between the tapu periods lasted for fifteen days. Though at these times pupils continued to live at the *oho au*, they were free to go and come as they pleased. But all the articles associated with their persons during the time of instruction remained tapu and must not be allowed to come in contact with outsiders. After being released at the beginning of the recess, every individual was obliged to bathe in the sea.

During the consecrated instruction there were two sessions each day, one in the morning and one at night. The *tuhuna* was the master in the *oho au* and had to be obeyed. A woman whose monthly period came on at this time had to absent herself until her recovery. If she concealed her condition, the *tuhuna* always detected it by his skill. He was sometimes angered by such concealment to the extent of stopping the whole process of instruction and refusing to continue his work, leaving the *oho au* and going home. Or he might merely send the woman home.

If a pupil for whom the *oho au* had been built proved to be too stupid or inattentive to learn what was being taught, the *tuhuna* would stop his work and go home. The term *koai* was applied to those who were not sufficiently tapu to be capable of receiving instruction.

After the labor of instruction was completed, the *oho au* was destroyed.

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children sleep beside the parents. As most houses are quite small, parents and children are seldom far apart. Only when a child is 7 or 8 will some attempt be made to prevent it from witnessing the parents in coitus. (Most adults apparently prefer to believe that the children always are asleep, although the same adults can be prevailed upon to recount some of the acts which they witnessed as children.) Further, the association of infants with somewhat older children who "baby sit" during parts of the day, has the effect of placing the infant in a position to learn many of the overt practices of children. Marquesan children are therefore quite sophisticated at very early ages. This sophistication manifests itself in an early beginning of sexual play. 864 [854]

/22/ Masturbation (pau pau heke) among males begins about the age of three, or sometimes earlier. Many male children masturbate before they talk. The masturbation technique of children is exactly like that of adults -- the penis and hand are moistened with saliva to increase the sensation and ease. Most children are taught this by example of older boys. It was nearly impossible to obtain data on female masturbation, due to the extreme reluctance of women to discuss this on any terms with a male or female investigator. Only one occurrence was noted, this a story by a girl who claimed she had witnessed a very young girl in the Convent School of Atuona on Hiva Oa digitally masturbate in the mornings. It is probable that female masturbation is no less frequent than male masturbation, however, as males make frequent reference to female practices. 839 864 [871]

Young boys from the ages of 6 or 7 upward quite frequently gather surreptitiously in the bush for masturbation contests. The objects of these contests is to see who can ejaculate (manini, haka te'a) first. Naturally the younger members of these groups are physiologically incapable of ejaculation, and their participation appears to be based on their desire for sexual stimulation derived both from the actual manipulation of the genitals as well as from observing 857 864 839

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transition into a normal sex life somewhat easier. Most girls begin sexual relations about the age of 11 or 12. It was noteworthy that in some cases menstruation started after the first child. Menarche is certainly viewed as a milestone in the individual life cycle, for it was /30/ often well-remembered by elderly women. It does not have the high emotional coloring attached to circumcision for the male, however. First intercourse is usually with an adult male, frequently occurring in a chance situation where the girl is surprised alone in the brush or while in bathing. In Atuona, where the convent school for girls of the archipelago is maintained by the Missionaries of the Sacre's Coeurs de Piopus, many of the girls have their first sexual experience while picking coffee on the mission lands. There, during coffee season, the girls are sent out to harvest the crop, but many of the male residents of the valley wait in the dense brush around the coffee stands in hope of finding a willing girl. Girls who do not receive the advances of males at these times are often raped with the help of their more sophisticated girl friends, to insure that they will not confess what they have witnessed.

[145] [881] [797] [871] [839]

Beside such frequent chance meetings in the bush, some contact occurs around the homes of girls approaching puberty. Nocturnal visitations by males begin and become more frequent as physical maturation becomes more obvious. Most of these night forays are unsuccessful due to the unsophisticated behavior of the girls, who are quite fearful of parental intrusion. Parents often take elaborate precautions to protect girls at this time, forcing them to sleep in inaccessible corners of the house, with younger children or with the parents close by; forbidding trips to the latrine unchaperoned; closing all windows and doors tightly and tying a noisy dog around the house.

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/31/ Under certain circumstances, however, the parents will openly condone sexual relations for young girls, and go so far as to force them into it if they feel that the rewards are sufficient. The motivation in such cases is invariably economic. The presence of a government fishing vessel in the archipelago provoked a wholesale business in bartering sexual favors for

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The sequence of vaginal astringents is terminated at puberty, but a new type of medication is begun in some cases, to alter the color of the mucus membranes and the labiae. It [856] is believed to be shameful for the labiae or mucus lining of the vulva to be excessively ruddy in color, hence a preparation of chopped young coconut meat is applied over the vulva to [824] alter the color of the parts in question. A supposed secondary effect of this medication is to render the pubic hair (hu'u hu'u) more pliable and soft, as coarse pubic hair is considered to be somewhat unbecoming.

/33/ Girls at puberty continue to receive sexual instruc- 864 tions from their grandmothers or members of the grandmother's [602] generation, but much is also learned from more sexually ad- [603] vanced friends. At this age, Marquesan girls are often seen [863] together, talking secretively for long periods of time. The [531] talks almost invariably involve sexual matters. For this reason, government school teachers state that it is wiser to release [875] girls from school at this point, as their interests often attract [871] and produce "adverse" effects on younger girls in the lower grades of school.

At puberty, female homosexuality occurs. One context 864 in which some homosexual play takes place is during instruc- 838 tion of relatively sexually inexperienced girls by others who are more experienced. In such instruction, both girls remove their clothing and assume a position of copulation. The instructor supposedly demonstrates the positions of intercourse and the pelvic movements, acting first as the "girl" and then the "boy" of the cpuple.

Although very much at ease with each other in states of 291 undress, girls at puberty become very self-conscious about ap- 883 pearing in mixed company in any type of attire that might be termed daring. In intercourse they seldom remove all of their [833] clothing, usually merely pulling up their skirt, even if there is no probability of being surprised en flagrante. Swimming is [526] indulged in fully dressed, if there is any possibility of being observed, while bathing nude in secluded pools is quite com- [515] mon and semi-nudity around the house is the rule.

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context that sex is of great value. Of all the things most troublesome to the missionary, sexual misdeeds are near the top of the list; therefore, there is no better way to act out one's aggression than to continually transgress the rules laid down by the overlords. The transgressions are seldom brought to the attention of the missionary, by virtue of the fact that Marquesans do not consider truth in the confessional to be necessary, and a solid native front opposes missionary efforts to learn details of any misdeeds.

An excellent example of the effectiveness of this information blocking is the continual male invasion of the dormitories of the convent school in Hiva Oa, every night. [871] So far as could be determined, this has never come to the attention of the school authorities within the memory of anyone living, which is almost incredible when one considers the "gold-fish bowl" quality of life in any Marquesan community.

/116/ The strong antagonism to the mission can be 154
seen in the continual moral testing of these individuals carried 182
on by the native population. Constant probing for weak- 797
nesses in sexual mores, most often by women, if not success- 831
ful, results in a proliferation of fantasy imputing all sorts of sexual misconduct to the missionary involved. The slightest deviation by a missionary from an impossible set of moral standards set up by the natives is occasion for tremendous gossip and speculation about the state of the individual's moral decay. The relatively few actual faux pas committed by missionaries are remembered in almost clinical detail.

Thus, it appears that native sexual behavior has been 182
relatively well-preserved over the tragic period since the 831
French occupation at least, functioning as a form of passive resistance directed mainly at the mission, which [797] has played such a large role in the destruction of the native culture, a role the importance of which has by no means escaped the Marquesans of today. Despite the disappearance of the native religious, social and economic forms which gave much of this behavior meaning and integration in the